



The Bethel Courier.

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Bethel Historical Society



The Farwell Homestead, fall 1897

Left to Right: Cora (by tree), Grace, Lena, Wallace, Father, Mother (holding Marjorie), Sara, Eva. Photo courtesy of Marjorie Farwell Cummings.

MEMORIES OF AN EARLIER ERA

Part I

by Marjorie Farwell Cummings

Editor's Note: Marjorie Farwell Cummings was the seventh of nine children born to William Lewis and Addie Bryant Farwell on February 15, 1897 in Middle Intervale, Bethel. Located approximately four miles from Bethel Hill, the Farwell farm stood on a hillside about one mile up what is officially called the "Osgood Road" because a family by that name once lived there. Last year Mrs. Cummings recorded some of her memories and provided the Society with a copy which has been slightly edited to conform to space considerations. This is the first of two installments. Long a member of the Bethel Historical Society, Mrs. Cummings now lives in Sudbury Village, Bethel.

My father was the oldest child of Barbour B. Farwell, who was a grandson of Absolom Farwell, a Revolutionary War veteran and the first Farwell to settle in Bethel on what has been known as Farwell Mountain. I was told it was the custom at that time for a father to take the earnings of a son until he was twenty-one years old. He would loan the money out at interest; then when the son married he gave him one thousand dollars. With this money my father bought his farm, two cows, and a horse. The deed to the farm stated it was seventy-five acres more or less. This included tillage, pasture and woodland. Recently I was talking with the present owner and he said the town now taxes it for one hundred acres. At this writing (1982) the buildings are all gone and the tillage fields mostly grown up.

In the period just previous to their marriage, my parents were working for William (Bill) Mason. It was here that they met. This is the property presently owned by the Donald Eddys. The Masons had a small son named Herman. I have heard my mother tell how she had to chase and catch him every morning before she could comb his curly hair.

My mother's father died when she was thirteen and that was the end of her schooling. I remember hearing her speak of working in the textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts at one time. She had a brother, Earl Bryant, living in Lowell, who had a carriage shop. She lived with them while working there.

I regret that I do not know very much of what my father did before his marriage. I know that he attended Gould Academy for a time and that he taught school in a building that set on a knoll in the area that was called Sleepy Hollow. This would be somewhere between the roads that go up to the Barbour Farwell place and the road where we lived. My parents were married in April, 1879 when Papa was twenty-six and Mama nineteen years of age.

MY FIRST MEMORIES

At this writing, in 1982, I am eighty-five years of age and my sister Grace, who is about two and a half years older, and I are the only ones left of our large family. My earliest memory is not a happy one, but at age three and a half, I could not realize much about it. It was shortly after the birth of the ninth baby of my parents, a boy who lived only fifteen days. I mention this because it is the first event that made a lasting impression. The doctor was there and my mother was sitting in a rocking chair with the baby in her arms. Our Grandmother Farwell was with us at the time and she took Grace, my younger brother Robert and me out of the house and across the road where we often played, making mud pies, et cetera. The details are vague, but I remember riding home from the cemetery in the express wagon with the family.

The express wagon accommodated one, two, or three seats, whichever the event required, so it would carry the whole family when needed. It also could be used with shafts for one horse, or with a pole or tongue to use with two horses.

I was on the front seat between my mother and father, and
(Continued on Page 2)

SUDBURY CANADA DAYS

August 13 and 14

Old Time Pastimes

Moses Mason Museum

Robert was in Mama's lap. I remember the little coat and bonnet he was wearing. It had eiderdown around the face of the bonnet and collar. I like to touch it, it was so soft and pretty. The family were sad and quiet, but I could not understand what it was all about.

Grandmother Farwell made her home in later years with my father's brother, Porter Farwell, of East Bethel, but she spent some time with us in the summer. She used to keep a little switch stick near her and if we did anything she didn't like, she would use it on us when we got near enough. Mostly we wouldn't know what she did it for, as we did not do things to bother her. She used to crochet a lot, and I now have a pretty doily that she made. It is strange how some unimportant things stay with one while more important ones slip away. I thought it strange when at the table I saw my grandmother pour some of the tea from her cup into the saucer and drink it from the saucer. I was told she did it because the tea was too hot to drink from the cup at first. At times I saw other people do it also. Another eating habit I noticed was using the knife more to eat with. The knife was held in the right hand and the fork in the left, but the fork was used more to push the food onto the knife than it was to eat with.

I cannot remember my Grandmother Bryant. She died when I was quite young, but I was told she gave me my high chair. Grace was still using the one the other children had used and did not want to give it up. This chair stayed in the family for grandchildren to use when they came to visit, but I now have and treasure it as a memory of childhood.

OUR FARM HOME

Our farm home was a one and a half story building with a one story ell. The first floor of the main house included a kitchen and pantry, generally used also for dining; a dining-living room, a parlor used only for company and special occasions, and two bedrooms. The front hall and stairway led to four bedrooms, two on either side of the hall. Except for one of the downstairs bedrooms, all of the rooms were of good size. At one time the girls' bedroom had three double beds besides other essential furniture.

There was no central heating, but in each room there was a flue to the chimney so that a stove could be set up in time of illness. Otherwise there was no heat in the bedrooms and they got pretty cold in wintertime. It was the custom then to have a featherbed over the mattress. I have often wondered how they ever accumulated enough feathers to make all those featherbeds. We slept in cotton blankets in place of sheets in cold weather. Oftentimes bricks or soapstones were heated on the stove, wrapped up and placed in the beds before bedtime to take off the chill. With plenty of quilts we did not suffer. The young children were allowed to undress before the fireplace in the living room in the evening and in the morning scamper downstairs and dress before an already built fire in the fireplace, standing on the big hooked rug Mama had made.

To go back to the ell of the house: through the entrance door was a big summer kitchen; a door from that led to the woodshed, toilet and stairway to the connecting barn. At the left on the barn floor was the grainery, then a bay for hay and at the end a silo for the fodder corn. At the right was the tieup and stalls for two horses and about ten cows. On the outer side of the tieup a door and a sloping platform led down to the sheep pen. A watering tub with iron pump was about midway and then a big door that led to the barnyard. Overhead were scaffolds for hay. A two story henhouse and shop provided the closure for the other side of the barnyard and a fence and bars for an opening at the end.

There was a piazza on the front of the ell, and midway was a well and wooden pump that provided all the water for household use. In winter it had to be run down between pumpings so it would not freeze. Mama had a flower garden on the left corner next to the buildings and on the front lawn were rose bushes, a golden glow shrub and a locust tree. A rope swing hung from an apple tree branch in the orchard nearby.

Directly across the road from the buildings were two big maple shade trees. In summer a hammock hung between these trees. It would be around the year 1905 that two government surveyors were around measuring the height of land above sea level. It was exactly 1000 feet at that point and they painted "1000" on one of the trees and also on a big rock nearby. I am told the big tree is no longer there.

In my early memory there were two other families living on our road, the Osgoods only a short distance beyond us and Alfonso and Clara Bean and daughter Ada lived about a half mile beyond the Osgoods. The Beans moved to Holt Hill about the year 1900. I have a vague memory of their stopping to say goodbye as they drove past. Ada was a bit older than my oldest sister Cora and they started school together, so my mother told me. Later a William Brown from New Hampshire bought the place and lived there with his family for several years. When they moved it was sold to the Brown Company of Berlin, New Hampshire and I do not recall anyone living there after that. At the Osgood house were two brothers, George a bachelor and Slathel, known as "Slate", a widower. He had two grown children, Florence married and living in Locke's Mills and Frank who lived at home when he was not working elsewhere. A widowed lady, Eve Balentine, kept house for the Osgoods. She had two grown children, Marie and Walter, and two younger girls, Nettie and Esther, who went to school with us. Although the families did not visit back and forth often, it was a friendly and neighborly situation. "Slate" had a fiddle and sometimes brought it down and played for us. George was a hard working man and "Slate" the easy-going type. There was also another brother, Henry Melvin, called "Met", who came there to live with his wife Nancy after Eve had married and moved away. Another man who stopped in occasionally as he was on his way to call on the Osgoods was Billy Capen. He was fond of hard cider and would tease my father to give him some. Papa did not like to give it to him as he very easily became intoxicated, but he usually ended up drawing a small pitcher full for him; then Billy went on his way happy.

AS I REMEMBER HOW IT WAS

Because of the great advances that have taken place in my lifetime, I find it interesting in my retirement to think about the olden times, not to dwell on them, but to make comparisons. There are so many things I would like to know about our families, but now there is no one left to ask, so I am glad of the memories that have stayed with me. One can see that it was and is the desire of each generation to hope for better things for their children than they have had.

My mother told me how a generation or two earlier the head of the household would drive a yoke of oxen to Portland in the fall to lay in provisions for the winter. There were places along the way to put up for the night. What a long tedious trip that must have been, with the oxen plodding along in their slow step-by-step gait.

My father used to make a trip to Bethel Village once a week in wintertime. I can still envision his long well-worn brown fur coat that hung on a hook in the kitchen. Later it was

replaced with a new black one. Soapstones would be heated and put in the sleigh for warmth, along with the big buffalo robe. Papa subscribed to a weekly newspaper besides the local Bethel Citizen. At home that evening he would read aloud from the newspaper items of interest to the family and tell of any news he might have heard in the village.

In contrast, children of today have so much more to amuse themselves with, but still often get bored. I expect there were times when we got bored too, but they do not stand out in my mind. We three youngest children played together a lot. We had a few games we played; among those that come to mind are Fox and Geese which was a homemade board with wooden pegs; checkers, also a homemade board; a store-bought game that had dice for counters to make moves — I do not recall the name; there were card games like Authors, Old Maid and Slap Jack. Grace and I had dolls and the three of us played doctor, nurse and patient as I guess most children do. There were guessing games and one called I Spy where one would hide usually a thimble and tell about how high it was, and the first to find it was next to hide it. There was a sandbank a short distance over the road and in suitable weather we spent much time playing there. The two next door neighbor girls often played with us. While still quite young we were allowed to dig angleworms and go down in the woods to a brook that ran through our farm and fish for trout. Our fishpoles were cut from bushes and fish line with hook and sinker tied to the end of the poles. That was fun and we could really catch some trout.

Our older brother Wallace made us some beginners' height stilts that we got pleasure from trying to walk on. Now that I am in my advanced years with arthritis in my knees, I think about this venture. It sometimes seems that trying to walk on stilts compares quite favorably with trying to walk with arthritic knees.

I am sure at times we got unruly. My mother's usual punishments were to make us sit in chairs facing each other until we thought we could behave ourselves; sometimes we stood in a corner for a short time; rarely we might get our bottoms slapped by hand. I am sure we were never abused. I cannot remember Papa punishing us. If he spoke to us we seemed to know it was time to quiet down. In later years my oldest sister Cora told me our parents were not as strict with the younger children. However, we respected our parents and did not talk back to them.

Electricity, central heating, bathrooms, hot and cold running water, telephones, automobiles, radio and television were all in the future. Some of them were not too many years distant, while others were well into my adulthood. We were happy without them, as one does not miss what he has never had.

THE CREAM SEPARATOR

As time went on some new items of equipment were added that gave much satisfaction and made life a little easier. One such was the cream separator purchased in the early 1900's. Previous to this the milk was strained through thicknesses of cheesecloth into milk pans and set on the cellarway shelves for the cream to rise. The following morning it was brought out and with a skimmer made for the purpose, the cream was skimmed off and put into jars. Often when the milk had clabbered, some of it would be made into cottage cheese; it was called curd cheese then. What milk was not needed for household use was put into pails and fed to the pigs or young calves. Now with the separator, the milk was strained into a tank on the separator. What whole milk was wanted for the family was drawn off before turning the faucet to let the milk go through the machine while a crank

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

During the past five years the Society moved to financial independence through the receipt of substantial endowment funds from the Trustees of the William Bingham II Trust for Charity. While this generosity is deeply appreciated, no organization can rest upon past successes and survive. Accordingly, this year the Society Trustees established a committee to raise additional funds for endowment purposes in order to provide for future needs, particularly in the areas of expanded facilities and more staff. I am delighted that Howard Cole has agreed to head this drive and wish Howard and his committee the greatest success in reaching and perhaps surpassing the 1983 goal.

Donald G. Bennett

SOCIETY LAUNCHES ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

For the past five years the Society has received from the William Bingham II Trust for Charity annual grants for endowment purposes. Last year marked the end of this process and this money has been successfully invested to produce a reasonable income for the current operations of the Society. At the suggestion of the Bingham Trustees, this fund was named "Sidney's Fund" in honor of Dr. Sidney W. Davidson who was instrumental in the restoration and gift of the Moses Mason House to the Society in 1974.

Looking to the future, the Society trustees in 1975 established an endowment fund (known as the "Regular Endowment") which through prudent investment and annual donations by interested members and friends has grown to over \$5500. This fund represents the hope of the future if the Society is to develop as it should. Additional space and more staff are becoming increasingly essential. In order to provide these necessities in the future in a timely and adequate manner, the Trustees this year established an Endowment Campaign Committee to be headed by longtime life member Howard Cole. He will be assisted in this effort by Louise Lincoln, Society bookkeeper and former Treasurer; Barbara D. Brown, who has worked previously in raising funds for the Society; John B. Head, who serves on the Society's Investment Committee and Helen Morton, currently on the Board of Trustees. An appeal for funds will be made this summer and it is hoped a goal of \$5500 can be reached which would double the current fund balance.

SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Donald G. Bennett, President; Alden Kennett, Vice President; Mary C. Keniston, Secretary; Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Treasurer; Trustees: Edith Eaton Eddy, Helen Morton, Catherine Newell, Ronald Snyder, Willard Wight

was being turned. The cream would come out one spout in a small stream and the skim milk from another spout in a larger stream. I thought it was like magic to watch, and wondered how the machine could know which was cream and which milk.

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ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS OF HOTEL KEEPING ON BETHEL HILL

1983 marks the 150th year of hotel keeping on Bethel Hill. The first hotel was established by Jedediah Burbank near the site of the former Edwin Rowe store. Other hotels have been established in the vicinity, modified and renamed through the years. The following photographs document several of them.



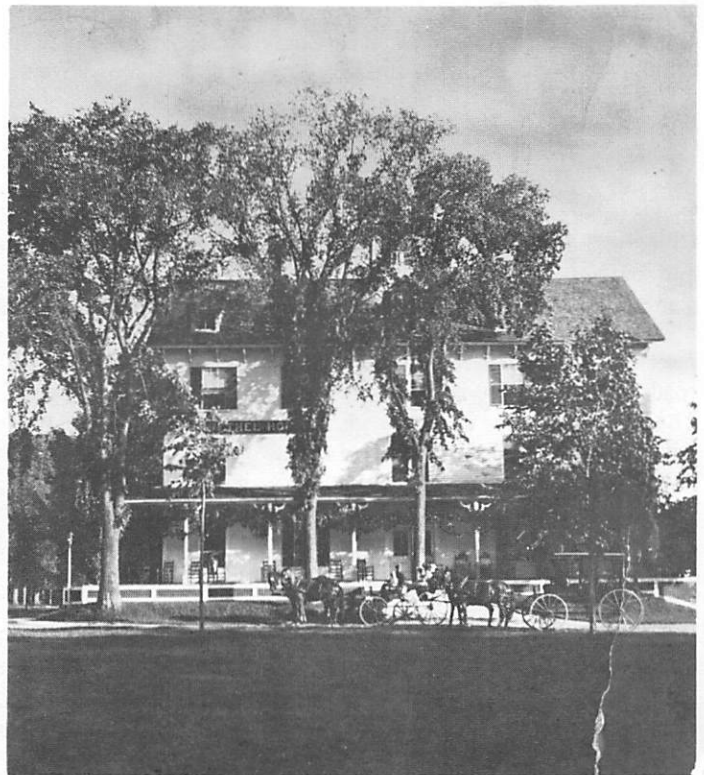
Chapman House c. 1860



The Elms c. 1875



Bethel House c. 1900



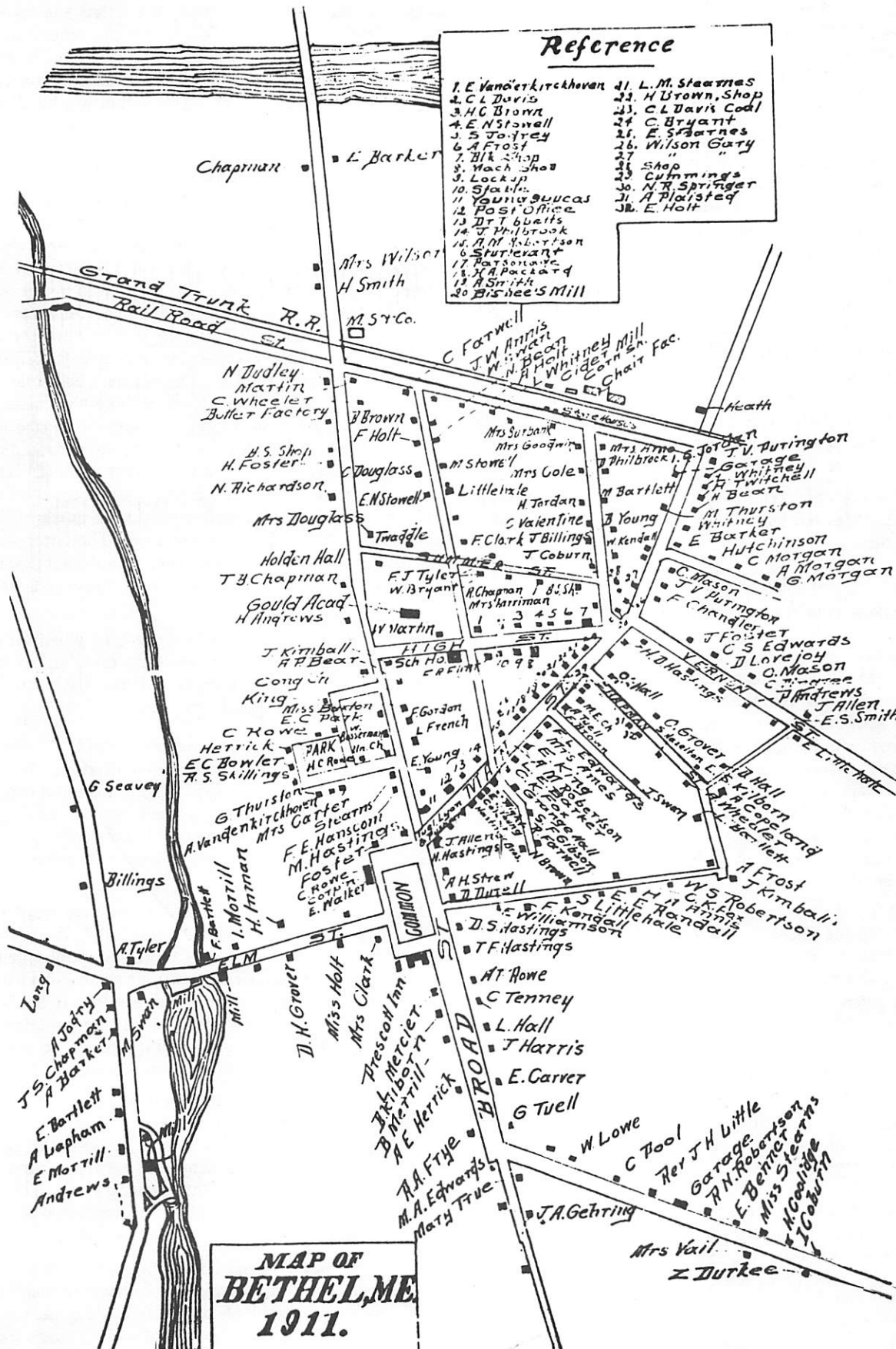
Bethel House c. 1900



Prospect House c. 1910



Tally Ho Coach at Bethel Inn, c. 1915



Town of Bethel, 1911

We had only a small herd of cattle so Mama churned once or twice a week as needed. This was a chore children could help in, turning the crank to the churn. I used to like to watch Mama make butter. When the cream had turned to chunks of butter, the buttermilk was drawn off and cold water turned in to wash the butter and help it collect. Then it was taken out onto a board kept for that purpose, and worked over to get out the last bit of buttermilk. If any was left in, it would turn rancid and spoil the taste of the butter. Next she added the dairy salt and kneaded it some more to get the salt evenly distributed. Now it was ready to be pressed into a one pound butter mold, wrapped in parchment butter paper and taken down to the cool cellar.

We had no other refrigeration up to that time. A little later my older brother Wallace built an icehouse and filled it with ice in the winter. He cut the ice from a pond he had made by damming a brook in our pasture. The sawdust to pack it in was hauled from a portable sawmill about two miles away. With the advent of having ice, a two gallon ice cream freezer was purchased and thus this delicacy was added to our country living. The ice cream was always churned on the stone steps to the back door and we were all willing to help.

Wallace had a yoke of oxen he used in various tasks about the farm. They were dark red with white on the face. Their names were Turk and Star.

SCHOOL DAYS

I expect being a younger member of a large family has both its advantages and disadvantages. When I was born I already had five sisters and one brother between the ages of two and a half and seventeen. My oldest sister Cora was attending Gould Academy at the time of my arrival. She drove to and from school the four miles with our slow work horse. As I now think of it, it must have required a lot of pluck, especially in winter when it would be dark before she reached home in the afternoon. Although it also was before my memory, it seems Sara must have been riding with her the last two years. After Cora's graduation from the Academy she worked her way to attend Colby College in Waterville. For that reason my older sister was pretty much a stranger to me in my early years.

After Sara left the Academy she went to work for the Bethel Chair Factory making cushions for their chairs. She had an apartment on Main Street for a time and Lena stayed with her while she was going to the Academy. They came home weekends and were given produce from the farm toward their living expenses. Lena taught school after she left the Academy. It was not required at that time to graduate. If you could pass the State Examinations, you were given a license to teach. Lena also worked for Dr. Wight at one time.

Cora did teach our school at least for a term and as she would be driving to and from school, I started at that time. The one memory that has stayed with me of this period of time is that of having it impressed on me that Cora was my teacher as well as sister and that I would be shown no favoritism. Grace had already started school. She was the first from our family to start school in the new school building in Middle Intervale. The other children had gone to an older building farther down the road toward the church. At various times in elementary school I had three of my sisters as teachers - Cora, Lena, and Eva. I do not know if teachers were hired by the term, but it seemed that some years we would have a different teacher each term.

The William Chase family lived across the road from the school. When anyone drove to school they were allowed to put

up the horse in their barn. A bag of hay would be taken for the horse's dinner when he would be fed and watered. There was a wellhouse outside the barn with a windlass and bucket to draw the water from the well. Someone from school was delegated to get a pail of water morning and noon for drinking. We had a small tin dipper and everybody at school drank from it, dipping it in the pail each time. This would not be allowed today, but I never heard that anyone suffered from it.

The teacher's pay was very little at that period of time and oftentimes they took on janitor duties for a little extra pay. That meant getting to school earlier in cold weather to build the fire in the big box stove that sat in the center of the room; it also meant staying after school to sweep and clean up. Often the children would help the teacher with the various chores that needed to be done. There was a flagpole in the school yard, and the flag was raised and lowered each morning and afternoon. Here we were taught the flag salute and repeated the oath of allegiance. For opening exercises we repeated the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer in unison. The teacher's schedule was tight in a one-room school, especially when there were classes in all the grades. Somehow they managed. Sometimes one of the older students would help with the younger ones. One pleasant little memory is receiving perfects for correct spelling. When we had earned ten we would receive a pretty card signed by the teacher. Some of the games I remember we played outside were hide and seek, scootch tag, haley over and dare. The latter was played in the road, but remember there were no automobiles at that time and very little traffic. We could see either way a good distance so there was no danger.

Mostly we walked to and from school. When the ground was bare there was a short cut we could take, and if the weather was too bad our parents drove for us. Each family provided transportation for their children.

Henry Hastings, Sr. was superintendent of schools during the entire period of my elementary education. We seldom had other visitors. Mr. Hastings was a big man and came in with a flourish, unannounced, and always sent a tingling sensation down my spine. The teacher would ask if there were any special classes he would like to hear; if there were none, it went on as scheduled.

I was told by my parents that when they went to school if they got punished, they would get another like punishment at home. That was not so when I went. For punishment we might have to stay in at recess and study, or stand out in the floor, or possibly get our hand slapped with a ruler. If the big boys got out of hand, they were reported to the superintendent and called out in the hall to get a talking to. I do not recall that discipline was a major problem in our school.

At the end of the school year there would be a picnic and often a little gift from our teacher. Maude Russell was our teacher more than any other one. One year she gave the girls a birthday book with our name on the front cover and inside a history of the origin of the name. I still have mine as a memento. For other special occasions we would have a program of some kind and parents were invited to attend.

I imagine over the years the school children were somewhat annoying to the Chase family without intentionally meaning to be. There were several large willow trees along the roadside down from one corner of the school yard. The Chase's pasture fence was attached to these trees. Grace remembers that some of the girls like to climb up and sit on the branches to eat their lunch. Mrs. Chase did not think they should so she would break eggs on the limbs so they couldn't sit on them. I was told that a

willow post will take root and that these trees grew from what was set out as fence posts.

William and Lucinda Chase had a son named Willis. He was through school before I started. He had a yoke of oxen and one winter he worked very hard at logging on their farm. Lucinda told my mother they wanted to make repairs on their house and then she hoped our mother would give Willis one of her girls for a wife. However, it was not to be as Willis died not long after his project. It was thought he strained his heart with the heavy work.

Many years later, around the year 1940, the East Bethel and Middle Intervale schools were closed and the children transported by bus to the village schools in Bethel. So it was that another chapter in country living came to an end.

In the beginning Middle Intervale had been a thriving little settlement, but after the Grand Trunk Railway went through Bethel all that changed and Bethel became the center of activity.

IN MEMORIAM

Died, June 2, 1983, Marah Webster. A member since 1979, Mrs. Webster often demonstrated her toll painting abilities at several Society Heritage Days.

Died, July 18, 1983, Beatrice Brown Conrad. A member since 1966, Mrs. Conrad was a very generous donor to the Society and for a number of years served as a guide in the museum.

EDITOR'S CORNER

In the Fall, 1982 issue of the "Courier" appeared the news of the donation of two portraits of Alphin and Roxanna Twitchell from Life Member Roxanne Twitchell Sly of Brooklin, Maine, a great granddaughter. The Society recently received news that it has received a grant from the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities to assist with conservation work on the portraits. This is welcome news indeed and the work will begin soon after the Moses Mason Museum closes in the fall. It is expected that the portraits will be returned to the museum in time for the 1984 season.

SRH

ART SHOW AND BIRTHDAY PARTY HELD MEMORIAL WEEKEND

Over one hundred persons attended the fourth annual Faye Taylor Memorial Art Show and the observance of the 194th birthday of Dr. Moses Mason, Memorial Weekend, May 28 and 29 at the Moses Mason Museum.

The Faye Taylor Memorial Art Show named for Society Charter Member Faye Sanborn Taylor (1908-1972) and a local artist of note was highlighted with over two hundred entries from the schools of SAD #44 and Gould Academy. The judges, this year composed of Sue Farrar, Alice Johnson and Melody Bonnema, selected the following winners: in the elementary division, first prize, Scott Emery, Grade 5, Andover Elementary School; second prize, Julie Newton, Grade 5, Crescent Park; third prize, Darrin Reynolds, Grade 1, Ethel Bisbee School; in the upper division (Grades six through twelve) first prize, Mary Isham, Gould Academy; second prize, Alec Newell, Grade 7, Telstar Middle School; third prize, Greg Simmons, Andover Elementary School, Grade 6. Cash prizes and appropriate ribbons were provided by the Society for each winner.

The Faye Taylor Memorial Landscape Award was won by Donald G. Bennett with his oil of Riverside Farm, Bethel. This prize was generously provided by the Bethel Savings Bank where Mrs. Taylor was employed for many years.

On Sunday afternoon the 194th birthday of Dr. Moses Mason was observed by an official birthday cake once again ably made by Diane S. Howe. Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Perkins as usual portrayed the Doctor and his wife Agnes. Strawberry punch was served by Barbara Douglass in the winter kitchen and Helen Morton (sketching), Grace Buck (Huck Weaving), Agnes Haines (basket-making) and E. Dick Hastings (needlepoint) added to the festivities with craft demonstrations. Old time music on the piano was provided by Arlene G. Brown, Edna York and Mary Valentine. Acting as hostesses were Judy Haskell and Ruth Wight of the Museum Committee.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Frederick and Mina McMillin, Bethel. Mr. & Mrs. McMillin, now retired, live across from the Moses Mason Museum on Mason Street.

Paul and Helen V. Judkins, Dixfield. Mr. & Mrs. Judkins are both retired. Mrs. Judkins, the former Helen Varner, was long a teacher in Bethel Schools.

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past.

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) free admission to the museum | (5) quarterly newsletter |
| (2) special discounts at museum store | (6) reduced course fees |
| (3) preferred rate for meeting room rental | (7) voting rights in the Society |
| (4) special library and archival privileges | (8) special invitations to Society occasions |

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-----Sustaining \$2.50 (Individual)
-----Contributing \$10.00
-----Patron \$25.00
-----Students (under 18 years) \$1.00

-----Life over 55 years \$50.00 single
-----Life over 55 years \$75.00 couple
-----Life under 55 years \$100.00 single
-----Life under 55 years \$150.00 couple

BOOK REVIEW

Howard S. Russell, *INDIAN NEW ENGLAND BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER* (Hanover, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1980), pp. xii, 284, \$17.50.

As many of us enjoy the yield of vegetable gardens and participate in the toil associated with same, it may be comforting to know that our efforts are part of a tradition in New England that pre-dates white settlement. *Indian New England Before the Mayflower* is a readable account of Indian life just prior to recorded white contact. The strong feature of this volume is certainly the author's concentration on food, its cultivation or capture, storage, preparation and consumption, and use of plants for medicinal purposes. Russell's previous book, *Long Deep Furrow, Three Centuries of Farming in New England* attests to his particular interest in agricultural methods.

In the author's opinion, the New England Indian diet consisted of low or no sodium, diversified meat, fish and fowl, complex carbohydrates, high fiber and no sugar (except with northern groups who produced maple sugar). The methods employed by the Indians included clearing of large field areas by burning, use of fish as fertilizer and diversification of many varieties of plants for both food and medicine. Readers interested in agriculture and/or botany will find the detailed description of medicinal plants and discussion of planting practices and food storage methods useful.

The book is not without weaknesses. Russell tends to generalize too often about New England Indians and to minimize tribal and linguistic differences between northern and southern regions. Other recent works would be more useful for readers interested in specific tribal identities and practices. One excellent source is the Northeast volume (XV) of the Smithsonian's *Handbook of North American Indians*, available from the Maine State Library.

Russell's book is readable and useful in its respect for the ordered and environmentally-sound Indian way of life. For readers interested in agriculture, Indian medicine and diet, it is a treat.

Catherine S-C Newell

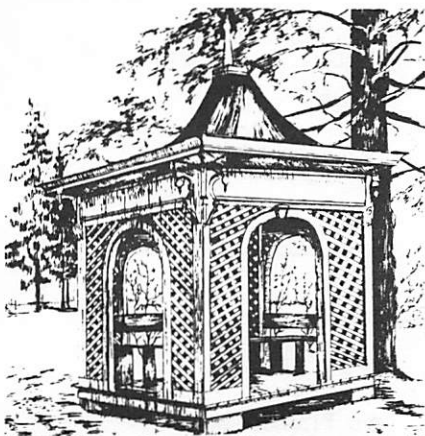
SOCIETY RECEIVES GRANT TO PUBLISH OXFORD COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL GUIDE

On June 29th, the Bethel Historical Society received word from Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, of a grant to the Society in the amount of \$9000 to complete work on a publication outlining Oxford County's architectural heritage. This grant, administered by the Society for the Oxford County Historic Resource Survey, follows another grant received in the spring of 1982 which covered costs of the remaining research and writing towards final publication. The Oxford County Survey began in 1980 under the direction of George Allen and had as its purpose an inventory of the historic and architecturally important structures built before 1930 in Oxford County. Due to funding cut-backs in 1981, the Survey was revised and volunteer efforts continued the pattern of research until funding became available again in 1982. Under last year's grant, Randall H. Bennett, an active member of the Society's Education and Research Committee and frequent contributor to the *Courier*, joined the Survey staff. With nearly all the writing for the architectural guide complete, the Society has appointed Bennett, who has published extensively in Maine magazines and historical journals, to conduct the Survey's remaining work and serve as coordinator for the Oxford County book. Bennett, who edited and published the regional history *Sunday River Sketches* in 1977, hopes to have the book available to the public early in 1984.

The Society is indebted to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and the National Park Service for their continued interest and financial commitment.

Published quarterly by the Bethel Historical Society, Stanley R. Howe, Editor. Please address all inquiries and suggestions to Editor, Bethel Historical Society Newsletter, Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217.

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